**GOD WITH US**

Matthew 1:18-25

Key Verse 23

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

**Introduction**



 Merry Christmas! Today’ passage shows that the baby Jesus, who is the Immanuel God, came to the earth. In this passage we can also know the origin of Jesus, his mission, and the meaning of His birth on earth. He was sent from God through the Holy Spirit. He came to save his people from their sins. He is the Almighty God who came to this world to be with His people. May God open our spiritual eyes and see the glory of Jesus who is the Savior, the King and the Messiah.

1. Read verses 18-19. How did the birth of Jesus the Messiah come about? (18) What does this reveal about Jesus? Why did Joseph want to divorce Mary quietly? (19)

1-1. Read verses 18-19.

**18** This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23163d)]: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. **19** Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23164e)] did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

1-2. How did the birth of Jesus the Messiah come about? (18)

***· This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.***

· Mary was a virgin “pledged to be married” to Joseph. The couple was legally bound together as husband and wifebut yet did not live together. Mary was legally *married* to Joseph and was his *wife* (19).

· “before they came together” - Mary was still a virgin. Jesus’ origin is no human.

· Pledged to be married to Joseph.

- The Christ had to be a descendant of David (2Sa 7:12-13). Jesus was a legal descendant of David through Joseph, His adoptive(step) father (1-17).

· **“through the Holy Spirit”**. Mary had become pregnant supernaturally, not naturally.

1-3. What does this reveal about Jesus?

***· she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit***

* Jesus’ origin is divine.

- Jesus was born through the Holy Spirit. Jesus came from the Father above, not from a man.

- Jesus was not a blood descendant of Adam. Jesus is not sinful. He has no sin (2Co 5:21; 1Pe 2:22; Heb 4:15).

- Jesus is God (John 1:1; 10:30; 20:28-29; 1Jn 5:20; Ro 9:5; 2Pe 1:1; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:8; Php 2:6).

- Our salvation depends on the fact of the virgin birth and Jesus’ identity as the God-man. For Christ to be sinless, he had to be born of a virgin and born through the Holy Spirit.

- If Jesus was sinful, his death could not save the world. As a sinner, he would have to die for his own sin.

· Jesus was born of a woman so that he might be fully human (Gen 3:15; Gal 4:4)

- He became the God-man to be mediator between God and men (1Ti 2:5)

- Jesus is fully God and he is fully human (Col 2:9).

- How could God who is infinite in his qualities become a man in his finite qualities? This is quite a mystery but we believe it because nothing is impossible with God.

1-4. Why did Joseph want to divorce Mary quietly? (19)

***· Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yetdid not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly***

* Although they were not married, Joseph was considered Mary’s husband.
* He was faithful to the law - He had obeyed the law faithfully.

- He was one who lived righteously (lived a morally upright life) by his faith in God and observing the law.

· He was not ruled by his passions and emotion but by the love of God’s truth.

- Even though he was probably hurt, thinking that Mary had been unfaithful, he could control his natural feeling so as to please God.

- He also wanted to protect Mary from public disgrace.

- He had mercy on her; the ingredients of the righteous character of a righteous man are justice, mercy and faithfulness (Matthew 23:23).

- He considered divorcing her quietly rather than punishing her.

2. Read verses 20-21. How did God help Joseph? (20) What name was given to the son to be born? (21a) What was the significance of the name? (21b)

2-1. Read verses 20-21.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23166f)] because he will save his people from their sins.”

2-2. How did God help Joseph? (20)

 ***An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.***

* Joseph was the “son of David”

- Joseph was adescendant of King David.

- Joseph became Jesus’ adoptive father so that Jesus might become a legal descendant of David through Joseph.

· Godsent an angel to him in a dream.

- God sent an angel to explain about Mary’s pregnancy.

* God comforted Joseph through resolving his misunderstanding: what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

- “Do not be afraid to take Mary home”

* Here we may learn from Joseph. At Christmas time, Mary is in the spotlight for she was going to be the mother of Jesus, the promised Messiah.
* But Joseph also understood that God was calling him in person to be the legal guardian or the step father of Jesus and the protector of Mary.
* Joseph understood God’s will for Mary and himself. But understanding God’s will is one thing; accepting and obeying it is another.
* Mary’s becoming the mother of Jesus seemed to be a glorious job or a good mission but Joseph’s becoming the guardian of Jesus and the protector of Mary seemed not equally glorious.
* His mission seemed to be just that of a supporting role. His mission was to make a good environment for Mary and the baby Jesus.
* Anyway Joseph humbly accepted his role and a holy mission from God. When he woke up, he did obey what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. Praise God for using him for God’s glory!

2-3. What name was given to the son to be born? (21a)

***· She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus***

2-4. What was the significance of the name? (21b)

· ***because he will save his people from their sins***

* Jesus means ‘the Lord saves’

- It comes from the name Joshua (Num 13:16).

* Jesus entered this world on a mission to save people from sin.

- He came to save his people (John 10:3).

- His people are those who listen to his voice; they learn from him and follow him (John 10:16).

- He did not wait for us to come to him but he came to us. He came to those who were dead in sin and could not come to him (Ro 3:11).

· He came to save his people *from* their sins (Act 4:12).

- People cannot save themselves from their sins (Eph 2:1-2; Ro 5:6).

- He came as the *spiritual* Savior. But the people of Israel were waiting for a *political* Messiah to save them from Rome. Matthew clearly mentioned that Jesus is spiritual Messiah to save his people from their sins.

· The root cause of all the problems in this world is sin.

- There are so many problems in this world: Economic, social problems, poverty, addiction, sexual immorality, and divorce. But the most fundamental of all problems is sin.

- All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Ro 3:23)All are dead in their sins (Eph 2:1-2). All are slaves to sin (John 8:34)

· How can Jesus save his people from their sins?

1Co 15:3-4 reads,

 “For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures**, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”

* Jesus saves people from their sins by his death on the cross.

- God sent Jesus into the world as the Lamb of God to save the world from their sin (John 1:29)

- Jesus died on the cross, shedding his blood as Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world (Isa 53:7, 10; John 1:29).

3. Read verses 22-25. What prophecy was fulfilled through this event? (22-23, Isa 7:14) What does “Immanuel” mean? (23). What does ‘Immanuel’ reveal about God? How did Joseph obey God? (24-25)

3-1. Read verses 22-25.

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: **23** “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23168g)] (which means “God with us”).**24** When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. **25** But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

3-2. What prophecy was fulfilled through this event? (22-23, Isa 7:14)

***Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.***

· Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14.

- The virgin (Mary) was pregnant with child and gave birth to a son.

- The virgin birth of Jesus is the sign God gave us by which we can recognize him as our deliverer who came to bring us to God.

- This prophecy of Isaiah was given 730 years before Jesus' birth. When Aram and Samaria joined forces against Judah, Ahaz wanted to make a pact with Assyria. So, the Prophet Isaiah was sent to King Ahaz to persuade him to trust the Lord rather than Assyria. Isaiah promised him the sign of Immanuel, the sign that God was with his people as their Lord and protector.

3-3. What does “Immanuel” mean? (23).

 ***"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" -- which means, "God with us."***

* **"Immanuel" is another title of Jesus.**

- "Immanuel" refers to both his deity and his humanity. It refers to his incarnation (John 1:14)

3-4. What does ‘Immanuel’ reveal about God?

* God promised that he would be with his people.

- It means that He is with us all the time, no matter what situations we might be in.

* Immanuel Jesus shows the attributes of God.

- God is faithful. He always keeps his promise.

- He wants to be with us and to provide the best for us.

- God is our refuge. He is with us to protect us from the evil one.

- He wants to be with us even when nobody wants to be with us (Psa 142:4).

- God is graceful. He wants to be with us although we are wicked and vile in nature.

- God is humble. How low God had to bend down to be with sinners like us.He did not come down in a consuming fire but approachable as a man. He came humbly, gently as a baby to be with us.

- God is transcendent. He can be with us throughout the generation beyond time and space.

* Jesus is the mighty arm of the LORD who came down to find and rescue that which was lost.

- Jesus is with those who follow him in the narrow way of the cross (John 12:26; Mat 16:24; Ro 8:14); He is with those who listen to him and are led by him (John 10:27).

3-5. How did Joseph obey God? (24-25)

***· When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.***

* Joseph obeyed what the angel of the Lord commanded

- He trusted what the angel of the Lord had said to him.

* Joseph did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son.

- Joseph did not have sexual union with Mary until she gave birth to Jesus.

* Joseph gave the son the name Jesus. He obeyed without hesitation. Joseph looked like an ordinary carpenter. Humanly speaking, he was a lowly poor carpenter.
* But spiritually speaking, he was the son of David as the angel addressed him. He was a man of God with a humble, pure, gentle, understanding shepherd heart.
* God was pleased with Joseph and used him to make an environment for Mary and the birth of Jesus.
* May God raise many Josephs who have a righteous relationship with God and others, and work hard in order to make a good environment for God.

**Conclusion**

 Jesus is Immanuel. He is God incarnated. Jesus is our Savior who can redeem us from all our sins. We can find God’s compassion, mercy, grace and salvation in Jesus Christ. He is with us to save us and enable us to live a blessed life that can please God. May God bless us to accept Jesus as our savior and king and worship him and obey him so that we may have true peace and joy in him.

**One word, “God with us”**